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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TAIWAN DIPLOMATS BID ADIEU TO CHAD

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**¶1.** (SBU) SUMMARY: The timing of Chad's resumption of diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China was exquisitely timed to create the most humiliating situation possible for Taiwan, according to the outgoing Taiwan Ambassador. He speculated that Chad's decision was based on a desire to have relations with a powerful UN Security Council member (and one with close ties to Sudan). However, he also believed that China had been and would continue to support Chadian rebels. Aside from efforts by local authorities to take possession of Taiwanese assets in an agricultural development project in Southern Chad (resolved by intervention from the Ministry of Agriculture), the GOC is not impeding progress as Taiwan closes shop in Chad. Chad's Foreign Minister told us that recognition of the PRC was important for Chad's standing in the international community, as well as its relations with Sudan. The French believe that Chad's oil pipeline is a factor in China's interest in its new relationship with Chad. END SUMMARY.

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TAIWAN AMBASSADOR'S POST-MORTEM  
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**¶2.** (SBU) In what was described as a sequence of events designed to inflict the maximum humiliation on Taiwan, the Taiwan Ambassador was informed at 3 p.m. on Saturday, August 5 to inform him that Chad would resume relations with the People's Republic of China. With less than an hour to spare before a large, high-level delegation, (led by the Foreign Minister) took off for President Deby's inauguration ceremony, the Taiwan Ambassador urgently passed the message to abort the trip. In order to save face, Taiwan pre-empted the expected announcement from Chad that ties would be broken and made the announcement itself.

**¶3.** (SBU) During a lunch August 10 with Ambassador Soong Tzzy-Jeng, First Counselor Hu Fu Chung and Head of the Taiwanese Medical Mission. Kuo Tako, Ambassador Soong appeared resigned rather than bitter at the turn of events. While obviously smarting from the humiliation that China had visited on Taiwan, he was also hugely relieved that he had been able to avert the diplomatic nightmare of having his Foreign Minister arrive in Chad only to be turned away. The

60 or so pre-paid hotel rooms and the irony of having just financed the repaving of the road in front of the Presidential Palace were lesser issues.

¶4. (SBU) Ambassador Soong, scheduled to depart later that day, appeared determined to close down shop with the maximum dignity and minimum fuss. He noted that a small contre-temps had taken place at Taiwan's agricultural development site, where the Governor had attempted to take possession of Taiwanese assets in order to "protect" (read: "seize") them. After complaining to the Ministry of Agriculture, the assets were released. According to Ambassador Soong, once a complete inventory of the goods (farm equipment, supplies, etc) had been made, it would all in fact be turned over to the Ministry of Agriculture. The Taiwanese Medical Mission was similarly turning over medical equipment and supplies to the hospital that it had been assisting.

¶5. (SBU) Ambassador Soong reported that additional Chadian police had been placed at the Taiwan installations, including the residence and the chancery (all properties belonging to the Government of Chad). Although his staff noted that this was a mixed blessing due to the lack of discipline displayed by the police, it also went some way in easing their anxiety that Taiwan establishments might be seen as a target for pillaging. Ambassador Wall offered to weigh in with the GOC should the Taiwanese experience any difficulties.

¶6. (SBU) Queried as to why Chad had taken the step of resuming ties with China, Ambassador Soong speculated that it had done so in order to have relations with a powerful country on the UN Security Council (UNSC). Since Chad sought a UN force on the border, it needed support from the UNSC. Reminded that China's other "ally," Sudan, sought to prevent such a force, Ambassador Soong laughed that this would have to be sorted out. But Ambassador Soong felt that Chad would come to regret the decision. He believed that China had, and

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would continue to support Chadian rebels. In fact, according to him, in the long run China sought to overturn the Deby regime. Ambassador Soong was coy in naming the country which, according to him, had exerted irresistible pressure on Chad to resume ties with China, but eventually he conceded that the country was Senegal. While there is a widespread popular belief that China is primarily interested in Chad's oil resources, members of the Taiwanese delegation did not offer this as a rationale for Chad's step. Rather, they were curious to learn U.S. views on Chad's oil prospects and what role China would play.

¶7. (SBU) Other Taiwanese enterprises in Chad (including a newly opened hotel/restaurant built by a private investor) and a 2006 joint venture between a Taiwan oil exploration company and the GOC will continue on in Chad. The Taiwanese staff anticipated that there would be greater Chinese investment and trade with Chad ahead. They acknowledged that there was no current bar to such trade or investment, but explained that having diplomatic relations would greatly facilitate the entry of commerce.

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CHAD'S FOREIGN MINISTER'S PERSPECTIVE  
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¶8. (SBU) During a August 12 meeting with Ambassador Wall, Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmad Allam-mi stated that the renewed diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China were a necessary step to improve Chad's position in the international community and that recognition of the PRC would provide a strong international ally which Chad could not afford to be without. He added that the GOC felt that the diplomatic recognition of China would also help improve relations with Sudan, which was a close ally to the PRC. When the Ambassador asked if the Foreign Minister felt that renewed diplomatic ties with the PRC would result in an end

to Chinese support for Chadian rebels in Sudan, Allam-mi said that while the PRC continued to deny any support for the Chadian rebel movement, he would logically expect that improved ties between Chad and China would mean an end to military assistance from the PRC to Chad.

¶9. (SBU) Allam-mi also said that while it had asked the Taiwan mission to leave Chad, the GOC still hoped to maintain economic and cultural relations with Taiwan. Ambassador Wall asked the Foreign Minister to ensure that the Taiwanese were treated in a fair and just manner during their departure from Chad. Allam-mi responded by saying that all members of the Taiwan mission would be treated fairly as they departed the country.

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THE FRENCH VIEW  
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¶10. (SBU) French Ambassador Bercot described for the Ambassador August 11 the results of inquiries the French Embassy made in Beijing about the matter. According to the what the French were told, China is ready to support a UN resolution on an international force in Darfur, but not without Sudan's acceptance. He said an understanding on ending Chinese arms transfers to Chadian rebels in Sudan was not part of the deal on recognition, since the Chinese denied involvement in these transfers. The Chinese are expecting to build a new embassy on land donated by the Chadian government within months, a possibility the French Ambassador thought was far too optimistic. He also believed that China remains interested in connecting its oil pipeline in Sudan to the Chad-Cameroon pipeline, giving it access to the Gulf of Guinea.

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COMMENT  
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¶11. (SBU) At no time did Ambassador Soong intimate that there had been any "negotiation" between Chad and Taiwan. Rather, the switch was one that he had sensed was in the

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offing and had suspected was only a matter of time. Not wanting to leave behind a bad impression as it wraps up its affairs, Taiwan may hold out the hope that one day the tide will turn again in its favor.

WALL